

Marta Jovanović

Motherhood

8 December 2017

Curated by Dr. Anja Foerschner

The installation “Motherhood” originated in a performance of the same title, that Marta Jovanovic performed on February 2016 at O3one Art space in Belgrade. The performance derived out of the artist’s deeply personal urge to contemplate her life choices and her status as a woman artist in a patriarchal world. Having just gone through a fundamental transformation in her personal life, which forced her to reevaluate her path, her



M. Jovanović
Motherhood 163



M. Jovanović, Motherhood 2017, installation view
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past and her future, she had to choose, once again, between society’s vision for a woman and her own way. This schism was symbolized in the performance by raw eggs, which Jovanovic smashed with a hammer. The number of eggs was carefully chosen, each egg representing one fertile day in her life since she started menstruating at age 16. She states with an ironic smirk that each egg she cracked in the performance is one chance of becoming a “real woman”, a mother that she “wasted on art.”

Jovanovic faced a decision that many women have to make and that for most women is accompanied by substantial doubt and a paralyzing feeling of being

torn. Do I want to become a mother or do I want to pursue my career? It also is a decision that possibly puts enormous strain on relationships and even friendships. Of course, it does not necessarily need to be “either” “or”, but sometimes it has to be. And what will the



M. Jovanović, Motherhood performance, 2016 © Eugster || Belgrade

implications be? Will I regret becoming a mother and wife and having to put my career on hold or even let it go entirely? Will I wish I had become a mother once I do not have the option any longer? Even though in the present day contraceptives and the increasing, yet still insufficient support systems for women have at least made a choice possible, that choice still needs to be made and its implications, which are grave and long-term, considered carefully.

In its sculptural transformation, Motherhood is conceived as an installation containing 267 eggs as of December 2017. It is a work-in process as the artist's future is impossible to predict: it will only be either through pregnancy or by entering menopause that the work's final state will be determined. The raw eggs that were used in the Motherhood performance are turned into unique sculptures in the installation, with each egg crafted in electroformed copper and gold-plated with 24K gold. Through this work, Jovanovic provides an ironic counter perspective to the destruction of her eggs in her performance: not only are the eggs being carefully restored in the installation, they and thus her “wasted opportunities” —have even been literally turned into gold.

Marta Jovanović, Motherhood

Opening: Friday December 8th

Closing: Friday January 26th

About the artist



Marta Jovanović
photo: Sanja Stefanović

Marta Jovanovic is a Belgrade-born interdisciplinary artist whose practice touches upon politics, identity, beauty and sexuality. She is the alumna of Tulane University (BA, 2001), Scuola Lorenzo de Medici in Florence (1999-2000), AIM (Artist in the Marketplace) program of the Bronx Museum (2013) and EMERGENYC (Hemispheric Art Institute, NYU, 2013).

Jovanović received Roma Capitale award for distinguished artistic contribution in Italy (2012), participated as a Venice Agendas speaker at the 55th Venice Biennial alongside Joan Jonas and Hans Ulrich Obrist (2013) and founded PerformanceHUB (2015), innovative educational program and platform for young artists and students working within the context of performance art. On Jovanović's work, Dr Kathy Battista wrote a book called *Performing the Self* (2013), and Jovanović herself is currently the subject of the upcoming documentary by Robert Adanto - *Born Just Now*, scheduled to premier early 2018.

Trailer of "[BORN JUST NOW](#)"
by Roberto Adanto